

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks. For the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention is allowable over the cited references.

The non-final Office Action dated November 17, 2004, indicated that claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112(2); claims 1-3, 7 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Zhou (U.S. Patent No. 6,172,409); and claims 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Zhou, and further in view of Wolf *et al.* ("Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era: Vol. 1" Lattice Press, Sunset Beach, CA., (1986), p. 478) and Banks ("Introduction to Microengineering," Demon Co., England (1999), p.2).

With respect to the Section 112(2) rejection, Applicant has amended claim 2 in a manner consistent with the amendment presented in the After Final Response and Amendment dated July 13, 2004. The term "said stepper shot" has been removed and replaced with "the first region." Applicant does not understand the Examiner's "Response to Argument" at page 5, but believes that this issue is moot. The claim distinctly points out the subject matter claimed and the rejection is overcome. Applicant accordingly requests that the Section 112(2) rejection be withdrawn.

Applicant respectfully traverses each of the prior art rejections (Section 102(e) and Section 103(a)) because the Office Action fails to present a reference or a combination of references that corresponds to the claimed invention. The Office Action fails to identify any teachings in the primary '409 reference that suggest a first region of a wafer having four sides and having a scribe line along each of the four sides; a first alignment target on a first side of the first region and a second alignment target on a second side of the first region opposing said first side; and the two alignment targets located in mirror-image positions. If the Office Action is suggesting that the '409 reference teaches, in combination with notoriously well known art, a scribe line along each of the four sides of a region with each scribe line including four alignment targets, Applicant requests evidence of such assertion in accordance with MPEP § 2144.03. The '409 reference does not disclose a region having alignment targets on more than one side including a first and second alignment target on opposing sides and located in mirror-image positions. Without a presentation of correspondence to each of the claimed limitations, the prior art rejections cannot be maintained. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

With particular respect to claim 3, the Office Action fails to identify where the ‘409 reference allegedly teaches the claimed limitations. A brief review of the ‘409 reference indicated that the word “corner” is not mentioned anywhere in the reference. Without a presentation of evidence of correspondence to each of the claimed limitations, the Section 102(e) rejection cannot be maintained. Applicant accordingly requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

With particular respect to claim 21, the Office Action fails to identify where the ‘409 reference allegedly teaches each of the claimed limitations. The citation to col. 5, lines 50-51 is directed to a width of a grate in the ‘409 buffer structure, and not to a width of an alignment target, as claimed. Moreover, the citation makes no mention of the width corresponding to a stepper rotational error between a first stepper shot and a second stepper shot. Without a presentation of correspondence to each of the claimed limitations, the Section 102(e) rejection cannot be maintained and Applicant requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

With respect to the Section 103(a) rejection of dependent claims 4 and 5, Applicant respectfully traverses because the Office Action fails to present correspondence to each of the claimed limitations as discussed above. Both claims 4 and 5 depend from claim 1 which was improperly rejected as discussed above. Without a presentation of correspondence between each of the claimed limitations and the cited references, the Section 103(a) rejection cannot stand. Applicant accordingly requests that the Section 103(a) rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner’s “Response to Arguments” at page 5 appears to ignore the basic requirement for evidence in support of a rejection. *See, e.g.,* 35 U.S.C. § 132. Moreover, the Examiner’s unsupported argument is not necessarily supportive of the Examiner’s conclusion because such repetitive structure on a wafer does not necessarily repeat on each of the four sides of the region, as claimed. Thus, the rejection is untenable on multiple grounds.

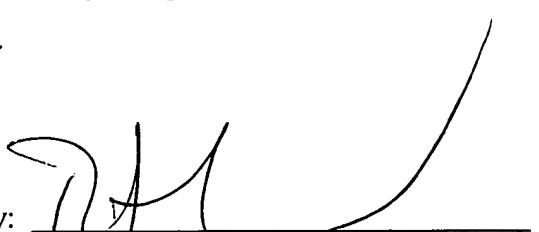
In view of the remarks above, Applicant believes that each of the rejections has been overcome and the application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any remaining issues that could be readily addressed over the telephone, the Examiner is asked to contact the agent overseeing the application file, Mr. Peter Zawilski, of Philips Corporation at (408) 474-9063.

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